THE SHAKERITE

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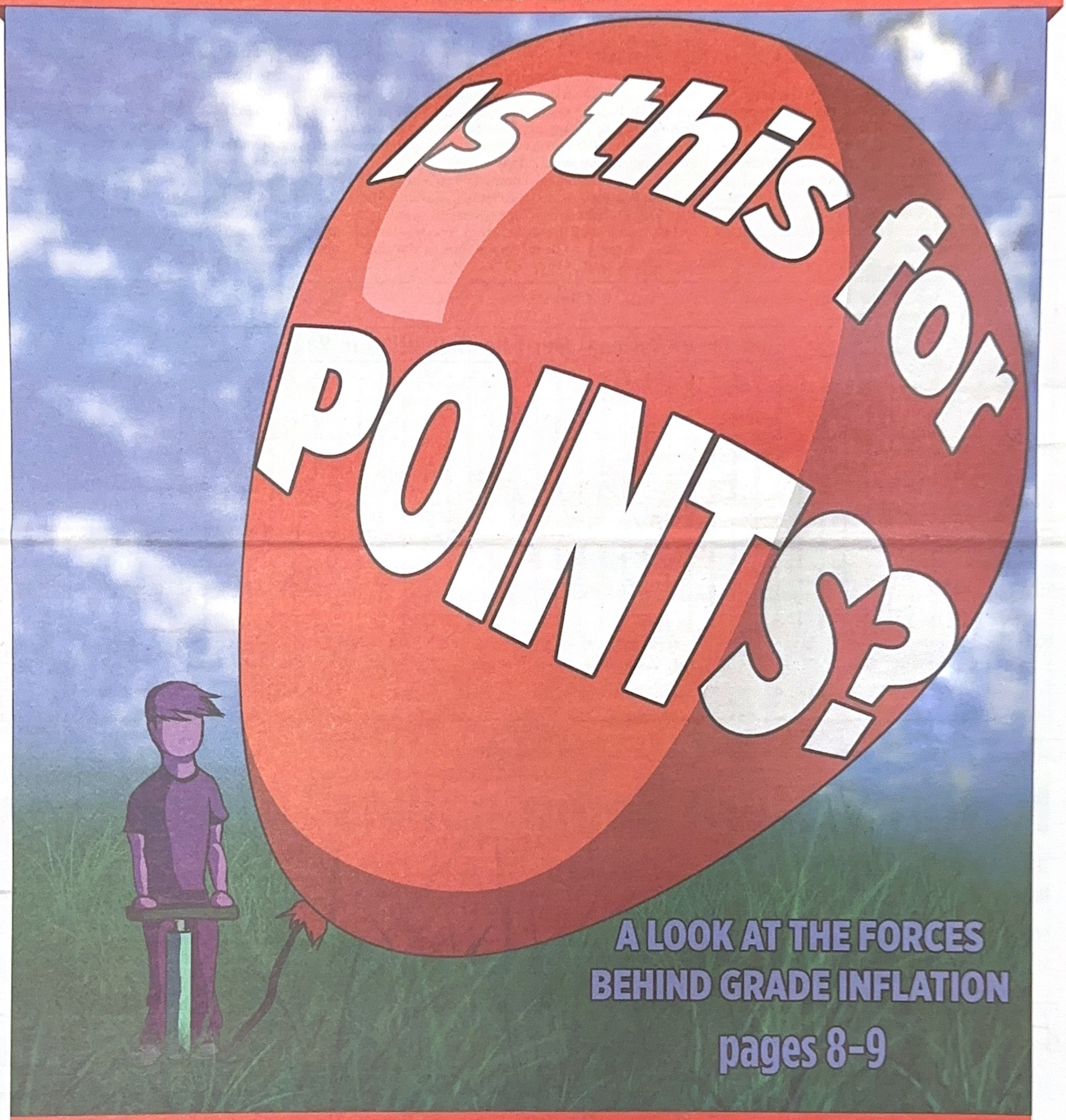

A LOOK AT THE FORCES BEHIND GRADE INFLATION

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Sophomore Mugged of Phone, Cash While Walking Home

MARCIA BROWN INVESTIGATIONS EDITOR

A sophomore boy was mugged by two males while walking home from a pickup football game at Shaker Heights High School Nov. 21.

A storm of tweets flooded Twitter on the first day of Thanksgiving break with a hashtag urging prayer for the mugging victim.

The boy said that as he crossed the triangle at the intersection of Lee and Aldersyde roads, he heard two male voices behind him. When he turned to look, he also saw two sophomore classmates standing in the distance.

After asking to make a call on the victim's phone, the two males pocketed it.

"I was like, 'What the hell are they doing'," the victim said. He followed them and repeatedly asked for his phone back.

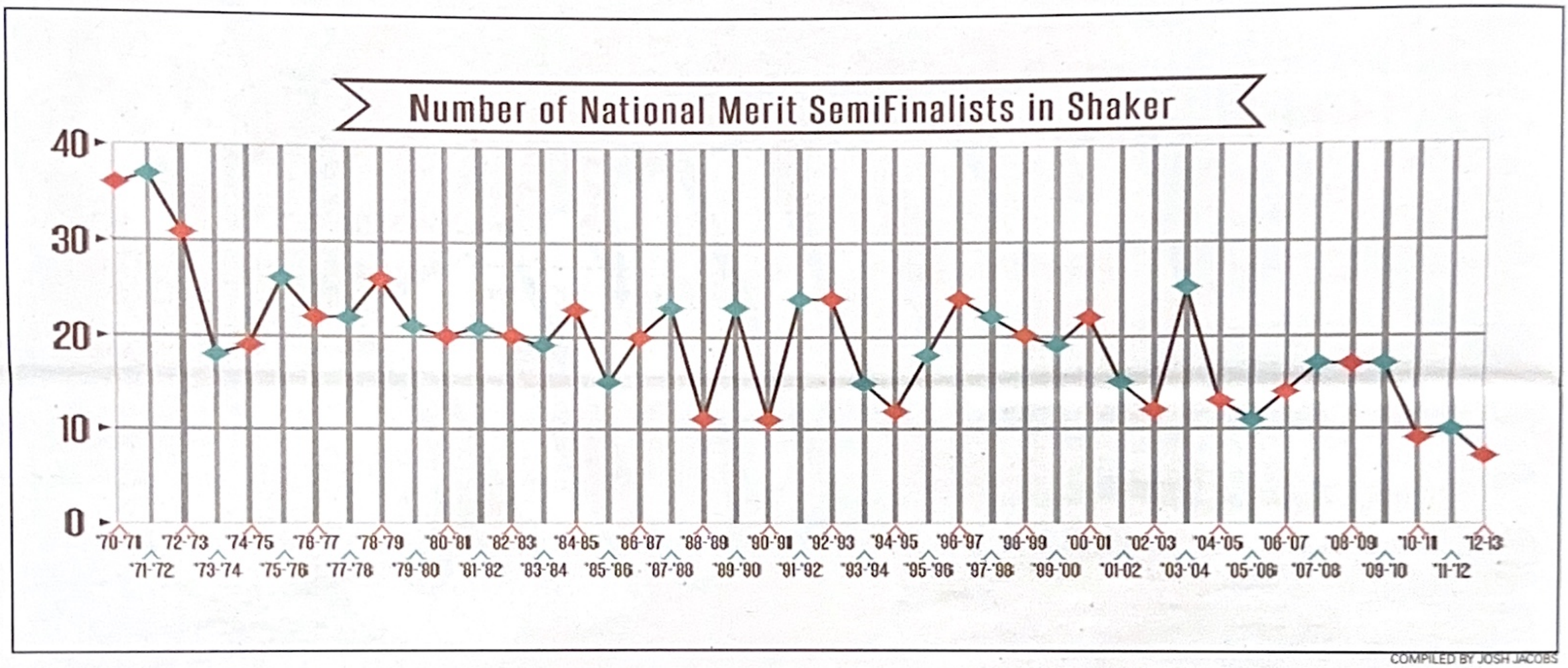
Reaching the intersection, the younger male asked how much the victim bought the phone for. "I had my red bag and I tried to give them the only $20 I had if they would give me my phone back," the victim said. Trying for an exchange, the victim held the money up. The younger male snatched the money.

The younger male then counted down and as soon as he hit zero he punched the victim in the face. After snatching his red bag as well, the assailants ran south on Lee Road toward the Shaker Heights police station.

After catching up to the victim, one of the classmates he had previously had seen in the distance called 911. "We realized that something was about to go down, and we weren't about to leave him alone and not do anything," she said.

"My nose was just absolutely bleeding, and I was really mad at myself for letting this happen. Like, how could I be so stupid?" the victim said. "I want to learn from my mistakes, you know, awareness, but I just want to forget about it."

The response to the call was immediate. According to the victim, who was hospitalized but has recovered, the two boys were caught on Stockholm Road by about eight police cars. The police then drove the victim and both witnesses to identify the suspects.



COMPILED BY JOSH JACOBS

This graph displays the number of National Merit Semifinalists Shaker has had since 1970. Of the 1.5 million students who compete to be National Merit Semifinalists, about 50,000 are selected for recognition each year. In the past, the number of Shaker students named semifinalists has fluctuated, but over the past three years it has dipped dramatically and reached a new low.

National Merit Semifinalists Lowest Ever

The results are in: class of 2013 had only 7 National Merit Semifinalists this year

CARTER PARRY STAFF REPORTER

The number of National Merit Semifinalists reached an all-time low this year.

The class of 2013 includes only seven semifinalists.

Shaker Heights High School has an SAT average about 100 points higher than the national average; Shaker exceeds the rest of the competition in Ohio and most states. However, the rate of students achieving the status of semifinalist for the National Merit Scholarship Program has been declining steadily since 1997.

The National Merit website states that the "National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships that began in 1955. High school students enter the National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship test," also known as PSATs. Students take the PSAT in September of the junior year, and results are typically released in December. National Merit status is determined by these PSAT scores.

Becoming a semifinalist boosts a student's college application. According to the National Merit Scholarship Corporation website, about 1.5 million students enter the competition yearly and about 50,000 are selected for some recognition.

By fall of the year after students take the test, the corporation narrows the number to about 16,000 students who qualify as semifinalists. By February, 15,000 of those students advance to finalist status. Of that group, 8,300 are awarded scholarship money.

David PeterJohn

Although Shaker still has more yearly semifinalists compared to other schools, its average is declining.

"I am aware that there have been fewer numbers of National Merit Semifinalists over the last two or three years," guidance counselor David Peterjohn said. Asked about ways to restore the number of semifinalists, he said, "I believe continuing with the Princeton Review's test prep would be helpful and perhaps adding another general test-taking program of greater length could be helpful."

The percent of seniors earning National Merit status varies. In the 1970s, the senior class was very large and usually around 13 to 17 percent of them earned National Merit recognition.

In the past three years, the number of awards received has been as low as eight percent of the senior class.

Peterjohn thinks analysis of the scores may help find a solution to the problem. "It might help to look at where some of the scores are dropping and see if any work can be done within curriculum of specific classes to improve students' skills," he said.

Students React to Mark Freeman's Career

Looking back on Freeman's lengthy tenure, school closings not the only action students have noticed

JOHN VODREY, SAM MITRO AND MARIA SLOVIKOVSKI STAFF REPORTERS

When the 2012-2013 schools year ends, so will 24 years of the District's guidance under Superintendent Mark Freeman.

Many students know Freeman for his record when it comes to cancelling school. "In all honesty, I've always thought of the superintendent as just 'the guy that calls the snow days,'" junior Shaun Roy said.

Shaun Roy

But many students are familiar with the longtime administrator and his impact on the schools.

Senior Teja Kasturi thinks Freeman has done a good job and has had the best interest of Shaker at heart. "I haven't seen any real issues with Shaker as a whole in my time here, yet Freeman continues to push for advancing Shaker and its community," he said.

Kasturi believes Freeman worked to continuously improve the schools. "I'd assume he has had some role in the implementation of [the International Baccalaureate program], but that just shows his commitment to serving our schools and pushing our community to the next level," he said, noting Freeman's advocacy for the Student Group on Race Relations and other high school programs.

Kasturi said he wants the next superintendent to "continue the Shaker tradition of academic excellence and diversity in religion, race, ethnicity and thought."

Teja Kasturi

"Anyone who's able to champion those ideals is a good superintendent in my book," he said.

Some students are looking for some new qualities in the new superintendent. "I'd like to see some changes in science and technology," said Roy, president of the Science Olympiad team. "I feel that as a district, improvements in technology education will aid students in the 21st century."

Junior Yixuan Wang would like to see the new superintendent promote more transparency and listen to students. "I think that it might make a refreshing change if they were to actually address the students of the school district," Wang said. "It wouldn't necessarily have to be something incredibly formal or motivational, but maybe a short speech or conversation session where they tell us what they're planning for the year and we have the chance to ask any questions we might have."

"Obviously, he could've been more liberal with the snow days, but in a way, his reluctance to give them shows that he truly cares about making our education count."

TEJA KASTURI

Sophomore Bess Aronoff said she would like Freeman's successor to be, "someone who understands how important the school district is to Shaker."

Sophomore Ben Robertson would like the next superintendent to be "in touch with the needs of students as well as the interests and concerns of both parents and teachers."

But in the end, the main issue for some students is snow days. "The general consensus when he announced he was stepping down was 'Hooray, more snow days!' " Roy said.

Aronoff said she wants the next superintendent to be someone who will "call off school before pretty much every other school in Cleveland does."

Kasturi said he thinks Freeman's commitment to education is evident in his approach to inclement weather. "Obviously, he could have been more liberal with the snow days," said Kasturi, "but in a way, his reluctance to give them shows that he truly cares about making our education count."

BOE Seeks Public's Views About New Superintendent

The district has hired the search firm Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates to find a replacement for the retiring Mark Freeman

JOHN VODREY AND MARIA SLOVIKOVSKI STAFF REPORTERS

The Shaker Heights Board of Education invited students and community members to share their opinions on the district's superintendency by completing an online survey and attending two public meetings in December.

The first meeting, in which the board hopes to gain public input on "the desired characteristics and skills you would like to see in the next superintendent," will take place Dec. 13, from 7- 8 p.m. in the high school's upper cafeteria. The second will be Dec. 15 from 9-10 a.m. at the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Community Building.The survey is available until Dec. 21 at the district website, shaker.org.

Among other things, it asks the participant to choose the eight "most important statements to you as you consider the needs of the District and the 'Desired Characteristics' of its next leader," from a list of 29 attributes.

After being superintendent of the district for 24 years, Mark Freeman announced Sept. 4 that he would retire at the end of the school year. The board held a special meeting regarding the superintendent search Nov. 19 and announced it had chosen the search firm of Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates to help it fill the position.

At the meeting, Dr. Marvin Edwards, a senior HYA associate, presented a timeline for the search process. He estimated the search will take about four to four and a half months. HYA has been in existence for more than 25 years and has conducted searches for administrators in many districts similar to Shaker. The firm, based in Chicago, has conducted more than 900 academic searches across the country.

About two or three weeks after the December public meetings and the survey administration, HYA will present a report publicly to the board with the leadership profile that fits the district. Six to 10 weeks later, HYA will give the board a slate of five "desired candidates."

Edwards recommended that this list not be released to the public, as doing so can prompt a candidate to drop out. Edwards said that at an early stage in the search process, candidates might not want their current employer to know they are looking at a different job. He said early disclosure "may lose good people," and that "applicants are interested at what point they will be exposed."

The board will interview the five candidates. After the interviews, the board will reduce the list of five candidates to three finalists. They will be announced to the public and spend the day in Shaker appearing at public events. The board will have dinner with each candidate separately and also interview each for a second and final time.

On the third day, after the board interviews the third finalist, the board will choose one "preferred candidate." After HYA runs a criminal background checks on the candidates, HYA will organize trips to the candidates' current workplaces to talk to colleagues to get a sense of their reputations. Board members may go on these trips.

If after all of this the board would still like to hire the preferred candidate, HYA will assist the board in contract negotiations.The goal is to finalize a contract within one to two weeks of the final interview.

According to Edwards, the ideal date by which to have a superintendent in place is July 1. This, he said, gives a "good overlap" for a transition period between Freeman and the newly hired superintendent.

The board discussed compensation for HYA in executive session at the Nov. 19 meeting.

What Does a Superintendant Do?

According to Peggy Caldwell, the spokesperson for the district, the Shaker superintendant is directly responsible for:

Establishing curriculum and support services within the parameters defined by state and federal governments

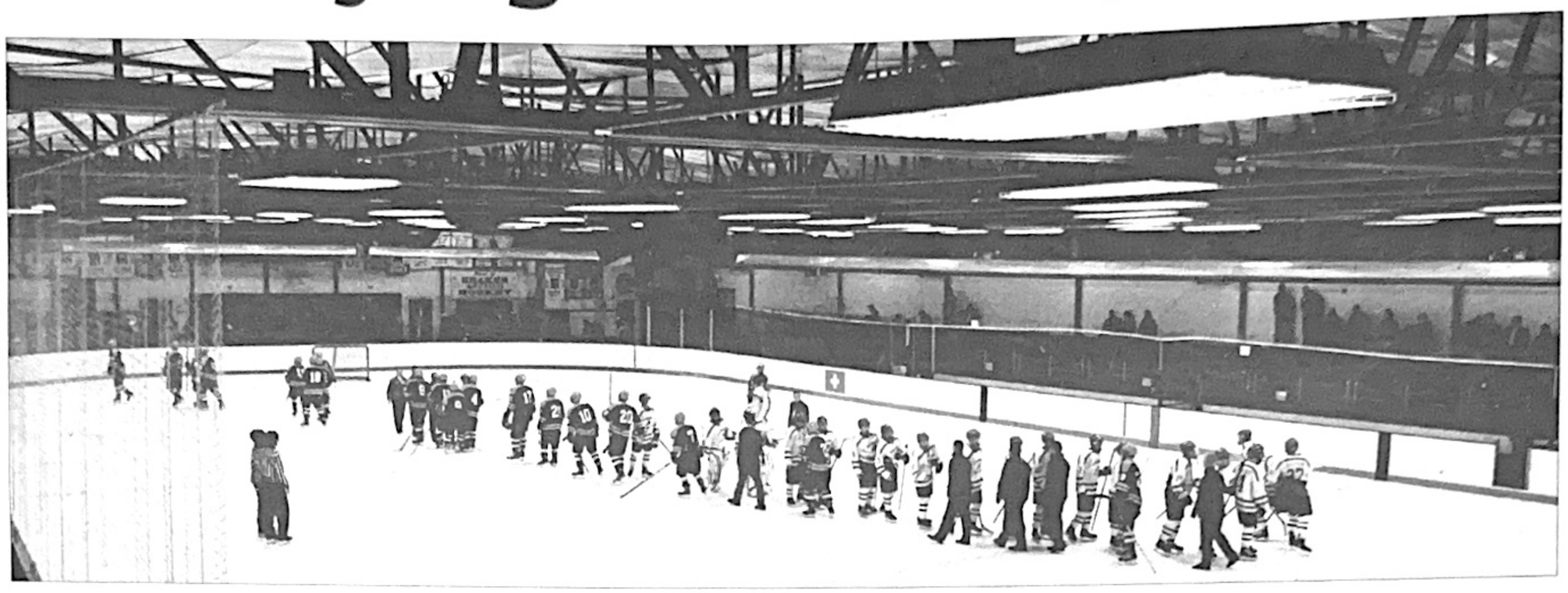
The hiring, evaluation, and training of school personnel

Management of operations such as transportation and maintenance

Establishment of procedures for carrying out school board policies and directives

School-community relations

A Friday Night Tradition, No More



ANDREW BOYLE// THE SHAKERITE

At the home opener Dec. 3 vs. Saint Edward at Thornton Park, the varsity hockey team fell short, 2-1. Senior Jacob Shick scored Shaker's only goal. Following the loss, the student section stayed enthusiastic, chanting "We still love you," while Shaker left the ice. With fewer Friday night games to choose from, this Monday night contest was well-attended.

Friday night hockey games are earlier and fewer because of drinking, complaints and availability

"For the time being, the 9 o'clock games will not be on the schedule."
DON READANCE

CLARA MEDALIE CAMPUS AND CITY EDITOR

Administrators changed the starting time and number of Friday night hockey games this year due to drinking at previous games, complaints from parents and the availability of the Thornton ice rink.

Athletic Director Don Readance noted some of the factors administrators took into account. "We did have the issue with drinking," he said. Readance added that there had also been multiple complaints from parents, who claimed that late games affected the ability of younger children to attend, and affected the timing of other Thornton Park programs.

The change in hockey game times from 9 p.m. disrupted Thornton's Friday Night Skate program. New Friday game times such as 7 p.m. prevent Friday Night Skates, so few Friday home games were scheduled this season. Readance said that the change brought some positive feedback from parents.

However, "there were some kids who grumbled," he said.

Last year's Dec. 2 hockey home opener, which resulted in alcohol breath testing and arrests, was a factor in the administration's decision. Last year, police surprised students by pulling some of them out of the stands and administering breath tests. Seven students -- five minors and two legal adults -- were arrested when the results of the breath tests showed they were intoxicated.

Police have said there will not be widespread testing this year but that students who appear intoxicated will be tested.

Following these events, Principal Michael Griffith changed the times of the remaining hockey games from 9 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. This year the change has remained; all of the Friday night games begin before 9.

Don Readance

For many years it has been a Shaker student and even parent tradition to attend the late hockey games. Social studies teacher and former Shaker student Charles Longo remembered attending the Friday night games as a student.

"I was there when it all began back in the '70s, and it was a huge deal, not just for the students but also the parents. It was a wild and crazy time period," he stated in an email interview.

Math teacher Joel Rathbone also remembers the games as a big event. "The Shaker vs US game was always huge in the '90's," he stated in an email message.

"I can't say the entire season had as much hype, but that game sure did."

However, Longo thinks the change in time will benefit Shaker students.

"I'm OK with the earlier times because it provides certain students with less time to get in trouble before the games," he said.

When asked if the hockey games would ever be restored to their late starting time, Readance said, "For the time being, the 9 o'clock games will not be on the schedule."

Rebecca Chaney

Player, manager hope time changes don't affect fan turnout

Hockey manager Rebecca Chaney has never been a huge sports fan. However, she loves the atmosphere of hockey games. "I enjoy watching our hockey team—it's a fun game to watch, it's a fun team to watch," she said.

The change in hockey game times and the small number of Friday night games makes Chaney nervous, though. Last year after Principal Michael Griffith changed the time from 9 p.m. to 6:45 p.m., Chaney noticed that the atmosphere shifted. "The student section was virtually empty because people got caught for drinking, which is sad because we have a really good team," she said.

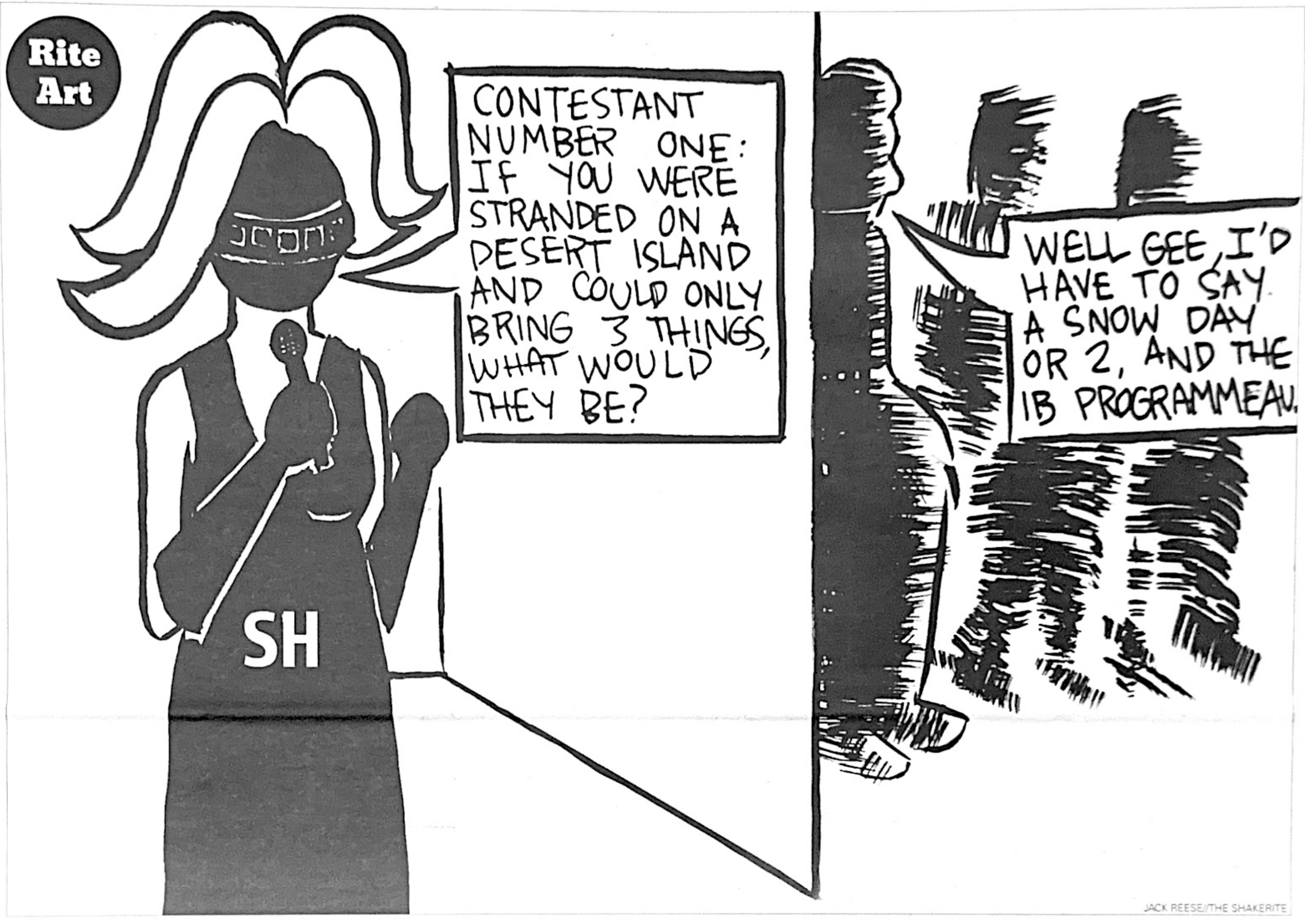
Varsity hockey player Emmett Sweeney would have preferred the game times to have remained unchanged. "I'm upset because I'd rather have them [hockey games] on Friday nights," he said, "because honestly, I'd rather see a rowdy crowd." After the home opener last year, he remembered the huge decrease in student fans at Friday night games.

Chaney hopes students will still be as enthusiastic about hockey games as in years past. She said that if attendance drops, "it's not really fair to the team."

COMPILED BY CLARA MEDALIE

On the Web

Read coverage of hockey games and all winter sports at www.shakerite.com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CONTESTANT NUMBER ONE: IF YOU WERE STRANDED ON A DESERT ISLAND AND COULD ONLY BRING 3 THINGS, WHAT WOULD THEY BE?
WELL GEE, I'D HAVE TO SAY A SNOW DAY OR 2, AND THE IB PROGRAMMEAU
SH
JACK REESE//THE SHAKERITE

Shaker's New Leader Should Consider Students' Views

Mark Freeman's days as the Shaker schools superintendent are nearing their end. There's nothing like change. Having a new superintendent could result in positive changes for our school. Many high school students instantly think about the possibility of more snow days, or new Pop-Tart flavors in the vending machines, but let's be real. The superintendent oversees the entire district and controls all the districts' rules and regulations. In Shaker, this powerful position requires someone whose professional expertise is balanced by an understanding of our community and its diverse strengths and challenges.

Sophomore Audrey Anderle sees promise in new leadership. "I expect the superintendent to put the needs of the students and teachers first, and help improve the school education and better the community," Anderle said. "I think it's sad that he [Freeman] is leaving, but it will be good to have a new start with a new point of view to help improve the school district."

We want a superintendent who stays in touch with the community and remains committed to considering what students want, instead of simply accepting school policies that would benefit from a fresh approach. He or she must be able to make changes in school policies that are beneficial and not superficial. We want someone who displays leadership and honesty and who is adaptable to change, someone who can be flexible and work with families, teachers and staff.

Without a doubt, during this prolonged economic slump, financial management is essential in a good superintendent. Since 2007, the district has cut 70 jobs through attrition. Forty-nine were maintenance and food service positions. The other 21 were teaching positions. Although Director of Communications Peggy Caldwell said some of those positions have been restored, the effect of these cuts is evident in every crowded classroom. Teachers make up two-thirds of school employees and are a big target when it's time to make cuts. We hope that the new superintendent looks for other ways to manage money.

The district has invested significant time, money and effort in the International Baccalaureate program in an effort to make the district unique. The next district leader should have past experience with an IB district in order to help Shaker achieve the program's full potential. Shaker also has an outstanding arts program; we need someone who strongly supports this program and contributes to showcasing it throughout the district.

Rite Idea

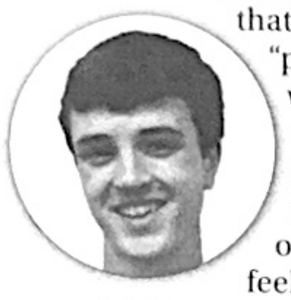
The superintendent is held accountable for snow days and cancellations due to other hazardous weather. Early dismissals and late starts also need careful management. Although students have found humor in Freeman's reputation for resisting Mother Nature, our safety rests in our superintendent's hands. With a national search, the new superintendent may not possess much winter weather savvy. We hope the board's choice will take this duty to heart.

Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates, the recruiting firm hired by the board of education, claims a record of recruiting strong leadership for organizations such as school districts. We want HYA to find a superintendent for our district whose priority is success. Freeman will be one tough act to follow after so many years, but fresh leadership could be a step in the right direction for our schools.

Later Start Improves Health and Grades

Shaker Heights High School should start school later every day, not only on Tuesdays.

According to the National Sleep Foundation, teenagers need nine and a quarter hours of sleep each night. For most of us this is nearly impossible, and not just because of our busy after-school schedules. The NSF says research has found that biological changes in teenagers "put most teens on a later sleep-wake clock. As a result, when it is time to wake up for school, the adolescent's body says it is still the middle of the night, and he or she has had too little sleep to feel rested and alert."



John Vodrey

Teens are wired to fall asleep and wake up later than everyone else because melatonin, the brain's hormone which makes us feel sleepy, is produced later in the evening for teens than for children and adults. Our biological clocks are different in adolescence. According to KidsHealth.org, research shows that melatonin isn't secreted in teens' brains until about 11 p.m. and doesn't stop until about 8 a.m. Because melatonin is secreted earlier in adults and younger kids, they are able to fall asleep and wake up earlier than teens.

Let's say a student attending SHHS wakes up at 7 a.m. to get ready for school starting at 8:05 a.m. To get the recommended nine and a quarter hours, the student would have to fall asleep at 9:45 p.m. It takes most people about 15 minutes to fall asleep after getting in bed, so that would mean going to bed at 9:30 p.m. This is extremely uncommon for high school students. Even if the teen does climb into bed at 9:30 p.m., science seems to indicate they are unlikely to actually fall asleep until 11 p.m. or later. You can see the problem.

Shaker Heights Superintendent Mark Freeman said the district has considered starting school later for the high school before. "There are problems with all kinds of co-curricular activities," Freeman said. "It probably needs regional or state support because high schools interact with one another with various activities...If we act on our own and other high schools don't act, it creates much more of a problem. There are already issues with students missing classes, for example, for certain co-curriculars, including athletics where they have to travel, and this would really exacerbate that." Despite the challenges, Freeman said, "certainly it (starting school later for the high school) is worth exploring in light of the scientific evidence."

A study by the University of Kentucky found only five percent of seniors in high school average eight or more hours of sleep a night. This is problematic because when teens lack sleep, they have trouble focusing in class and remembering what they learned. Junior Jack Crowley says he does not get enough sleep on an average school night. "With homework I'm up past midnight on a regular basis," Crowley said. Crowley said he gets more sleep on late start Tuesdays and starting school later everyday would increase the amount of sleep he gets.

Dr. Kyla Wahlstrom of the University of Minnesota conducted a survey of more than 7,000 high school students in Minnesota. "Teens who received A's averaged about 15 more minutes sleep than the B students, who in turn averaged 11 more minutes than the C's, and the C's had 10 more minutes than the D's." What seems like a small amount of sleep really counts!

The average teen needs 9.25 hours of sleep each night.

Only 5% of teens recieve more than eight hours of sleep each night.

15 minutes of sleep can change your average grade from a B to an A.

On average, it takes 15 minutes to fall asleep.

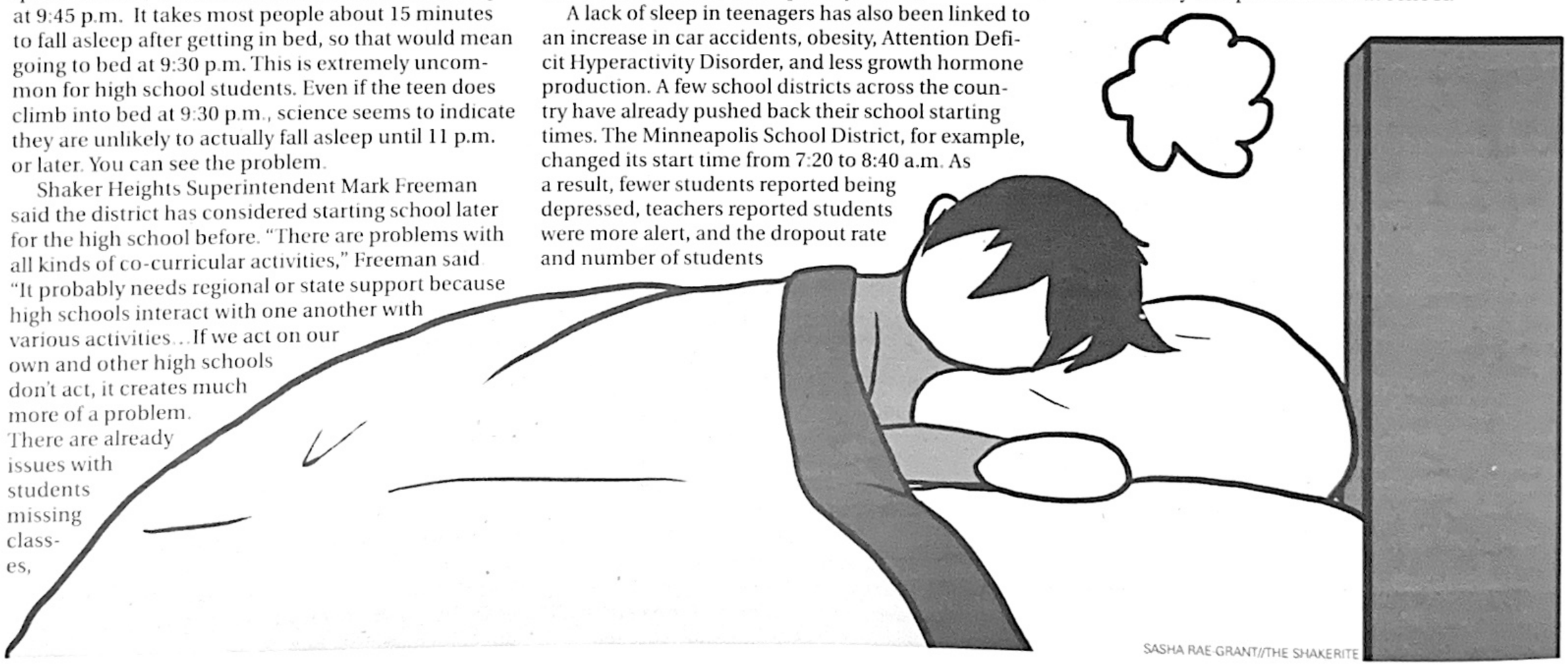
A lack of sleep in teenagers has also been linked to an increase in car accidents, obesity, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, and less growth hormone production. A few school districts across the country have already pushed back their school starting times. The Minneapolis School District, for example, changed its start time from 7:20 to 8:40 a.m. As a result, fewer students reported being depressed, teachers reported students were more alert, and the dropout rate and number of students switching schools went down. Edina, a suburb of Minneapolis, moved its start time from 7:25 to 8:30 a.m. In the year before the change in start time, the average score on math and verbal SAT for the top 10 percent of Edina's students was 1288.

One year later, with the later start time, the top 10 percent averaged 1500. Amazingly, this change could not be attributed to any variable other than later school start time. Another hour of sleep might not seem like a big enough change to make a difference, but as this data suggests, it can have a huge impact. Despite mountains of evidence, New York Magazine estimates that 85 percent of public high schools in the U.S. start before 8:15 a.m.

Sophomore Jordan Brett would support starting school later every day. "I feel like getting up at 7:30 or 8 is a very comfortable time for people to wake up at, while 6:30 or 7 definitely is not," Brett said.

As Superintendent Freeman said, the argument against pushing back high school start times across the country is primarily that it will interfere with the logistics of afterschool activities, not that a later start wouldn't improve student's health and learning. Edina parents were initially concerned about this, too, but after the completion of the first school year with the later start time, 92 percent of high school parents said they preferred the later start time.

In Shaker, the kindergarten through fourth grade elementary schools start at 9:05 a.m. This is an hour later than when first bell rings at the high school. Woodbury, grades 5 and 6, starts school in between these two times at 8:25 a.m., and at the middle school class begins at 8:02 a.m. Why is the school district starting school later for students at the elementary schools who naturally wake up earlier in the morning than for students at the high school, whose bodies need to wake up later? This system makes no sense. I propose that we reverse the schedule by starting school earlier for the elementary schools, and start class at the high school at 9 a.m. or later so students can get the sleep they need to be healthy and perform well at school.



SASHA RAE GRANT//THE SHAKERITE

The Evolution of a High Schooler

Freshmen Get Too Much Grief About Being New

AARON ALTCHOULER STAFF REPORTER

Freshman year sucks! Not only are you going from the middle school to a new high school, but upperclassmen despise you. They comment on how small you are and pick on you. Don't even get me started on what happens when they're in your classes. Not only do they think they're smarter than everyone, but, you guessed it, they pick on you! Upperclassmen always pull the "seniority" trick. "Oh that's your sandwich? Well I have seniority, so it's mine." Another reason freshmen year sucks is the clubs. You get bombarded with SGORR this, Student Council that, and posters pushing you to join sports or clubs on every wall. Why don't you all just leave us alone? We have enough physics homework, anyway.

Sophmores Forced into the Real World Too Quickly

HANNAH HEVERLING OPINION EDITOR

Oh, so this is high school. What classes to take?! APUSH, or not APUSH? Should I take a study hall? "The Great Gatsby"? IB next year, or not? Decisions, decisions. Goodbye freshman year, hello real world. Finally in the mix of our high school years, everything isn't as planned out and organized as it used to be. Time to grow up; we are no longer the babies of the high school. Another day, another Bio test. Sophomoritis? No way. Two more years to go. It's time to shine for the class of 2015.

Raider Rants

Not Every Extra Curricular is For a College Resume

SARAH SHAW OPINION EDITOR

Not everything is a resume builder. Not everything is for college. Just because I took on an extracurricular doesn't mean I just need something to put on my college application. Between SATs, ACTs and the junior year workload, I don't need to tack on anything else.

People are so caught up in college and their lives after college that without something else to make them look good on a college resume, their heads might explode. Deciding between AP or IB classes is enough to make anyone's head spin. And more often than not, juniors don't know where they want to go to college. Stop asking if everything is for college.

Please Keep Your Mind on Your Own College Application

MARIA SLOVIKOVSKI STAFF REPORTER

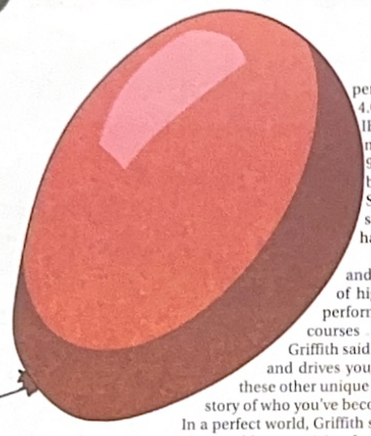
Applying to college is an individual activity, not a group sport. I'm tired of hearing people try to calculate their chances of getting into their reach school based on how many other Shaker seniors are applying. Worrying about others only causes more stress. You'll be happier if you focus on your own applications.

And when you're talking about your school choices, stop degrading your safety school. That school is likely someone's first choice -- or even their reach -- and they shouldn't feel ashamed about that. Work on perfecting your own applications, and everyone can be happy for you when you're accepted.

PUMP IT UP

MARCIA BROWN AND SHANE MCKEON INVESTIGATIONS EDITORS
ERICA SEMAN SENIOR WRITER JOSH JACOBS GRAPHIC ARTIST

SINCE 2002, SENIOR GPA'S OVER 4.0 HAVE DOUBLED. IS THERE A LIMIT TO GRADE INFLATION?



"I just wanted an A."

His freshman year, sophomore Jordan Brett was enrolled in 9 Honors Math, the highest level freshman math course. Brett struggled with the course, finishing the second semester with a high C. A strong performance on his final bumped him up to a B, but Brett still wanted that A.

With help from his family and counselor, Brett opted for grade replacement, through which students can change an entire semester grade in a fraction of the time. By taking a two-week summer course, four hours a day, five days a week, Brett was able to replace his B grade with an A on his college transcript.

"So in 40 hours I did the whole course, and it raised my grade to an A," Brett said. "I feel like it's kind of cheating."

The original and replacement grade are averaged into his GPA, but his high school transcript now reads 'A' for 9 Honors Math. Amended Substitute Senate Bill 311, introduced in 2007, eliminated limits on the number of "irregular course credits" a student is allowed, meaning students can take as many grade replacement courses as they wish.

Brett said his grade replacement cost somewhere between $150 and $350. With prices that high, grade replacement may be unattainable for economically disadvantaged students.

Guidance Department Chairwoman Eileen Blattner confirmed Brett's account of the grade replacement process.

Colleges can't discern between a grade received in a normal course and a grade received in a grade replacement course. "[High schools] don't tell the schools that you took the grade replacement," Brett said. "The schools look at [your transcript] and they see your A, and they think that it took you the entire year to get that A, whereas it only took you 40 hours."

On the Web Go to www.shakerite.com for teachers' reactions.

Brett plans to apply to the most selective colleges in the country, and he will most likely end up on the AP or IB track. Despite the differences between the two, the biggest similarities concern GPAs: both tracks offer classes graded on a five point scale.

Over the last decade, the number of Shaker students with GPA's of 4.0 or higher has increased dramatically; in the class of 2002, 43 of 384, or 11.2 percent of seniors, had GPA's greater than 4.0. In 2012, the first graduating class of IB Diploma students, that number had more than doubled to 23.7 percent, or 90 of 380 seniors. Although the number of high GPA students has risen, Shaker's average SAT scores have not seen the same increase. Instead, scores have fluctuated from class to class.

For Principal Michael Griffith, scores and grades aren't the most important part of high school. "You want to dive in and perform at the highest level you can in your courses . . . the grade will take care of itself," Griffith said. "What about the learning excites you and drives you and really makes you want to do all these other unique things outside? That's going to tell the story of who you've become, more than your numbers."

In a perfect world, Griffith said he "wouldn't care to give grades." Instead, he would stress giving feedback, such as sitting with a student one-on-one to rewrite an essay.

However, Griffith doesn't anticipate that change anytime soon. "The [college admissions] system doesn't help us to communicate [this idea] very well, because the system is designed to run on these numbers, and as long as that stays the same, we are in a hard world to change the minds of not just the kids, but the parents. The numbers are everything."

Further aggravating this obsession with numbers is Progress Book. Junior Ezra Zigmond, another student who plans on applying to highly selective colleges, can see the good and the bad of this tool. "I think it's very helpful to know where you stand in the class," Zigmond said. "[But] it causes unnecessary anxiety."

Because they have unlimited access to their marks, students have become much more obsessed with grade perfection. With this obsession has come an increase in students' thirst for extra credit.

According to Griffith, extra credit shouldn't be used to "manipulate a grade." Instead, he believes it should "honor the kid who went deeper into the content."

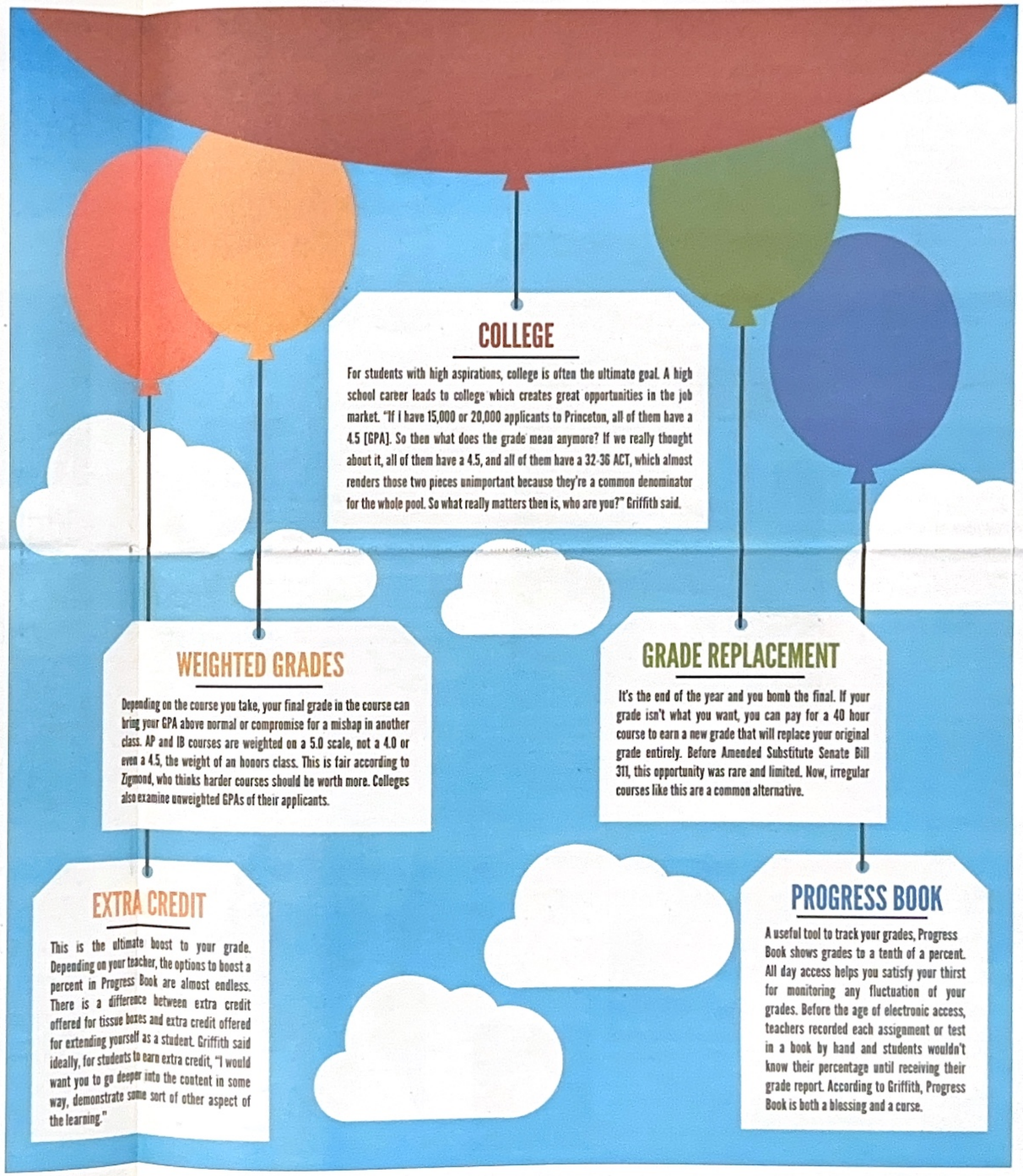
English teacher Chuck Kelly agrees with Griffith. "I feel that the things the students do for 'extra' credit can be extremely valuable," Kelly wrote in an email interview. "In fact, extra credit can help raise a lower grade enough that the student actually becomes more motivated to do well on the regular class work . . . I feel that the points can help especially when a student isn't as strong in a particular area in class; they still have an opportunity to achieve a grade that might be more reflective of their motivation and overall interest."

Griffith also rejects the notion of giving out extra credit for non-academic reasons, such as students bringing boxes of tissues to school. "The grade you got represented a statement of how much you knew and understood the standards [the teacher] was teaching," Griffith said. "If you were able to enhance that because you brought in tissues and all these other things, then the grade is no longer representative of your knowledge and what you know and can do against the standards. We've lost validity."

Regardless, grade obsession seems to be here to stay. When asked if he would replace his grade again, Brett said, "If I got a bad grade, then yeah."

At the end of the day, Griffith stresses that high school isn't about the grades you're given, but the knowledge you obtain. "The grade is not the end game. It's what I learned, not just about the content, but also about how to be a student." Griffith said that those lessons are "more powerful than any of the other things that you'll learn."

"So in 40 hours I did the whole course, and it raised my grade to an A. I feel like it's kind of cheating."
JORDAN BRETT


COLLEGE
For students with high aspirations, college is often the ultimate goal. A high school career leads to college which creates great opportunities in the job market. "If I have 15,000 or 20,000 applicants to Princeton, all of them have a 4.5 [GPA]. So then what does the grade mean anymore? If we really thought about it, all of them have a 4.5, and all of them have a 32-36 ACT, which almost renders those two pieces unimportant because they're a common denominator for the whole pool. So what really matters then is, who are you?" Griffith said.
WEIGHTED GRADES
Depending on the course you take, your final grade in the course can bring your GPA above normal or compromise for a mishap in another class. AP and IB courses are weighted on a 5.0 scale, not a 4.0 or even a 4.5, the weight of an honors class. This is fair according to Zigmond, who thinks harder courses should be worth more. Colleges also examine unweighted GPAs of their applicants.
GRADE REPLACEMENT
It's the end of the year and you bomb the final. If your grade isn't what you want, you can pay for a 40 hour course to earn a new grade that will replace your original grade entirely. Before Amended Substitute Senate Bill 311, this opportunity was rare and limited. Now, irregular courses like this are a common alternative.
EXTRA CREDIT
This is the ultimate boost to your grade. Depending on your teacher, the options to boost a percent in Progress Book are almost endless. There is a difference between extra credit offered for tissue boxes and extra credit offered for extending yourself as a student. Griffith said ideally, for students to earn extra credit, "I would want you to go deeper into the content in some way, demonstrate some sort of other aspect of the learning."
PROGRESS BOOK
A useful tool to track your grades, Progress Book shows grades to a tenth of a percent. All day access helps you satisfy your thirst for monitoring any fluctuation of your grades. Before the age of electronic access, teachers recorded each assignment or test in a book by hand and students wouldn't know their percentage until receiving their grade report. According to Griffith, Progress Book is both a blessing and a curse.

Extra Credit Stories

"I once got extra credit for giving my math teacher a PlayStation controller to use over winter break."
ZACHARY STECKEL

"I came to class every day, didn't go to the bathroom, didn't get water, and I got 50 points extra credit."
MICHAEL BLATCHFORD

"I once got extra credit for baking a cake for Spanish class. I got 30 points."
ANNA KATZ

"In the beginning of the year my science teacher asked us to send him an email—even if it had nothing on it—to make sure we could contact him. We got extra credit for it."
DEJAA CONYER

What Is Snapchat?

Snapchat is a free app that lets you share pictures with friends for a maximum of 10 seconds or a minimum of 1 second. Launched in 2011, Snapchat has grown exponentially among users (mainly teens), with an average of 20 million snaps (pictures) being shared every day. In addition to capturing pictures, Snapchat lets you add a short caption to the photo and draw on it using your finger. Users have adopted Snapchat as not only a means of entertainment but a form of communication. Freshman Jonah Ricinati said Snapchat beats texting. "You can actually see the person and they can make you laugh," he said. "It's just quicker and more personal."

COMPILED BY BRIDGET COOK AND ELANA ROSS

Why do students love it?

With something as simple as a snap and a tap, the phenomenon of Snapchat has become one of the most popular apps used by Shaker students.

Junior Shaun Roy is known by his friends as a frequent snap chatter. "For me personally, Snapchat is a way for me to send funny pictures of things I see to my friends. Often this turns into a conversation where snaps are sent back and forth in a short period of time. This can serve as a wonderful distraction to the busy days I may have," Roy said.

Senior Ifeolu Claytor said Snapchat is somewhat like Twitter, because it is a way to capture random moments and thoughts, but with pictures instead of words. "It is the funniest thing for the most random moments. I love Snapchat!" Claytor said.

Students prefer Snapchatting to sending pictures via text because sending a picture is not nearly as quick. But Snapchat speed works in more than one way. Sophomore Humara Nadeem said he prefers Snapchat because "other people can't see the picture and it will be gone unless they screenshot it."

COMPILED BY ALLIE HARRIS AND ELANA ROSS

"It is the funniest thing for the most random moments. I love Snapchat!"

IFEOLU CLAYTOR

MACKENZIE RICHARDSON

The drawbacks of snapping

More students attempt to amuse their friends lately by making funny faces in their Snapchats. And although they don't think these images will resurface, if their friends are quick, they can screenshot, or save a copy of, the snap. Claytor said he has been in a screenshot war before, which is when two people using Snapchat go back and forth screen-shotting each other's snaps.

These photos are often unflattering, and more often than not the pictures resurface on Twitter, Instagram or other social networks. "I think it's kind of dumb, and I've never done it," said junior Colleen O'Donnell of the embarrassing posts.

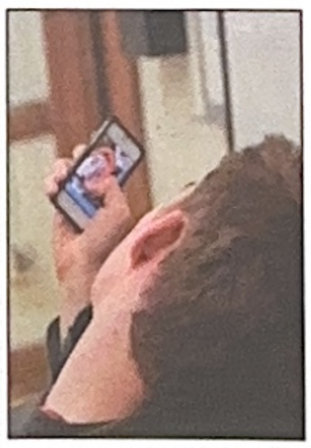
Junior Emily Maury has personally experienced this kind of humiliation. "I don't like how a picture can suddenly be shown to the whole world, especially when it's embarrassing because you never meant for anyone else to see it. It ruins trust between friends and is just downright embarrassing," Maury said.

COMPILED BY BRIDGET COOK AND ELANA ROSS

DEBORAH FALKOUN

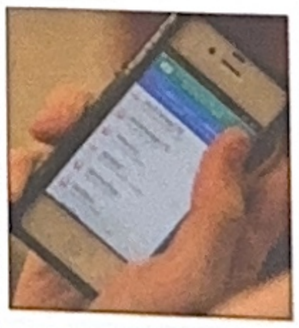
How to Snapchat

To take a picture, press the camera button at the bottom of the screen. Decide how much time you would like to let your friend see the picture by pressing the timer button to the bottom left of the screen.



You can tap the screen and type in a small message. You can also draw on the picture with the pencil button at the top right of the screen.

You can press the save button next to the timer at the bottom right. Doing so will save the Snapchat image to your phone. Choose a friend or friends to receive your picture and press the send arrow.



KATIE WILKINSON

Late Start, Late Students

Halls remain populated after the start of first period on Tuesdays, so detentions follow

AMANI HILL STAFF REPORTER

The number of tardy students on the new late start Tuesdays is nearly double that of that on any other day, and as of Oct. 16, detentions are to be handed out to late students as the administration attempts to fix the problem.

"It's upped," Assistant Principal Eric Hutchinson said of late arrivals on Tuesdays.

On Tuesdays this year, classes begin later to accommodate teacher meetings in which faculty collaborate to implement the International Baccalaureate program and standardization of curriculum and assessment.

School begins at 8:47 a.m. and ends at 3:21 p.m. rather than the normal schedule of 8:05 a.m. to 2:58 p.m.

According to Assistant Principal Sara Joyce, the average number of tardies for the past month on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays is 226. The average for Tuesdays has been 426.

Security personnel have been addressing late students before first period on Tuesdays. According to Joyce, they will assign late detentions to students found in the halls after the second bell on Tuesday mornings.

"They called home," said freshman Mekkah Husamadeen referring to the district's automated phone call explaining the new policy.

Husamadeen said giving detentions is necessary. "We come to school to learn and not to be late, so I think this policy, or whatever it is, is going to help us with being on time," she said.

Junior Sean Brown, however, said the issuing of detentions is an excessive response to a new challenge. "I believe that the detentions, to me, seem kind of extreme," Brown said. He said that the new Tuesday schedules interfere with students' usual routines, so stragglers after the late bell should be expected.

"I agree with the thought," said Brown. But, he added, issuing tardy detentions "should be up to the teachers."

Students aren't the only ones who have trouble adjusting to the new schedule.

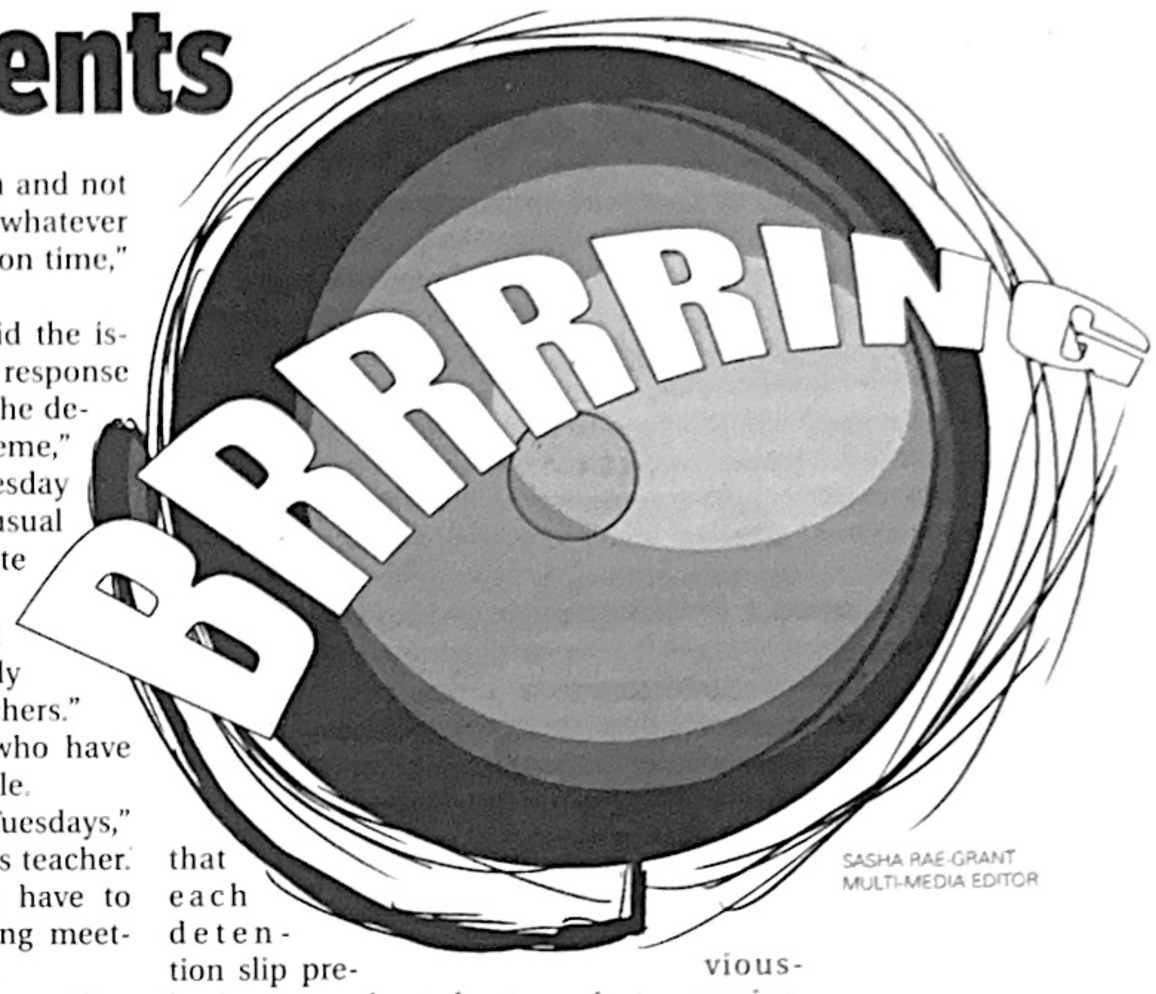
"I'm usually running around on Tuesdays," said Jessica O'Brien, a social studies teacher. Teachers with first-period classes have to manage attending Tuesday morning meetings and preparing for their classes.

"I'm usually not prepared," O'Brien said.

O'Brien said that she noticed that more students arrive late on Tuesdays. She said that it can make teaching the class more difficult depending on how late the students are. Students who arrive a couple minutes late don't pose as big a problem as those who come in 30 minutes into the class.

Until Oct. 16, security personnel handed out warnings.

"We didn't hand out detentions," said Vic Ferrell, safety and security coordinator. He said that each detention slip previously given to tardy students was just a warning, and students did not have to fulfill the detention. The warnings were to "draw attention to the fact that they're late."



SASHA RAE-GRANT
MULTI-MEDIA EDITOR

Joyce said that actual detentions were assigned beginning Oct. 16 and that attending detention is now mandatory.

The 106 hallway was crowded Oct. 16 at 8:46 a.m. and no security personnel were present there. However, students there cleared out quickly after the second bell. Other hallways observed remained populated at 8:50 a.m.

Staying Awake to Text is Harmful to Health

Beyond being sleepy during class, the long-term effects of late-night communication can be serious and permanent

BRIDGET COOK AND ANNA O'CONNELL SPOTLIGHT EDITORS

You send a couple texts, write a few tweets, check Instagram, and go to bed.

We all do it, but what we don't realize is how detrimental it can be to our health.

Cell phone use is a surprising cause of sleep deprivation, something nearly every hardworking Shaker student has felt at one time or another.

Many students don't realize how these habits and sleep loss harm their health.

Patterns of sleep deprivation cause exhaustion, alter eating habits and increase irritability.

These short-term affects can increase susceptibility to serious conditions including obesity, depression, heart disease and cancer.

"If I could get more sleep on a school night, I would love it, but between my computer, which makes me stay up about an hour later than I should, and homework, it's just not an option," freshman Carolyn Sindelar said.

Sindelar estimates she gets five hours of sleep on an average school night, and she's not alone in her wish to have more restful school nights.

Sophomore Charles Lampert, like Sindelar, is not satisfied with the amount of sleep he gets each night, which he said was "between 5 to 7.5 hours at most, and that's if I have no tests or quizzes the next day."

Carolyn Sindelar

Lampert said that his other electronic sleep disruptors are "listening to music on my iPod, watching movies on TV or watching MSNBC in political season."

Junior Maddie Neel gets seven hours of sleep on an average school night but admits that her phone can disrupt her rest. "I keep my phone next to my bed and if I wake up, I'll check it and reply to texts," she said.

Aside from cell phones, using computer screens and iPods, watching TV and bright lights all stall the body's ability to produce melatonin, an enzyme that assists the body in falling asleep.

An article published on the CBS news website recommends avoiding bright lights, keeping your phone in another room and shutting down electronics 45 minutes before going to sleep.

The same article, however, acknowledged that kids will use their gadgets even late into the night.

While the health problems that can result from excessive cell phone use are daunting, the solution is simple: turn your phone off and don't charge it next to your bed at night.

Lampert adheres to this advice every night. He explained that his phone is "on but in another room, so if I get any texts they wouldn't wake me."

Though it may seem strange at first, turning off your phone a good deal before bedtime can relieve stress, leave you well-rested, and reduce the risk of developing diabetes, cancer and heart disease.

Being able to get in contact with all your friends, not to mention the entire world via the Internet, is fun, but with all of the health risks involved, that text you want to send at midnight can probably wait until morning after a healthy seven or eight hours of sleep it's recommended teenagers get every night.

"If I could get more sleep on a school night, I would love it, but between my computer, which makes me stay up about an hour later than I should, and homework, it's just not an option."
CAROLYN SINDELAR

Logan Launches an Ice Cream Dream

A year after Sweetie Fry opened, the owner talks about his past success and what's in store for the future

ALEX RICH SPOTLIGHT MUSIC EDITOR

It was a dramatic and tasty transformation.

In the space long occupied by a photo studio at the corner of Lee and Essex, a small ice cream shop with a cute name first opened for business. A year later, the store has become the snack spot for everyone from teens to families. On weekends, a long line stretching out the door fills the street corner, making the somewhat innocuous shop hard to miss. Offering ice cream ranging from simple vanilla bean to maple bacon and fries covered in anything from chicken to parmesan and truffle oil, it's no wonder everyone is talking about Sweetie Fry.

The man behind it all is Keith Logan, a Cleveland Heights resident who, after working in corporate business development, which he described as "finding ways to grow for a big corporation and finding new markets and new products to help the company grow," decided to give ice cream a try. "It was a difficult time, the last half of those 10 years," he said. "I felt out of place and like I didn't belong, whereas Sweetie Fry feels like something I was born to do."

The shift from corporate business to ice cream seems strange, but necessity took over first. As Logan said, "I had to find a way to make a living after I was let go from my job." The second push came slightly later. "At my church, I did a faith development program that lets you learn what your gifts are, and they told me my three main strengths were hospitality, craftsmanship and community. When my wife said, 'What about ice cream on Lee Road,' I thought, well it has all three of those involved, so I used my business development experience to chase that idea."

"Sweetie Fry feels like something I was born to do."
KEITH LOGAN

Since then the business has steadily grown as the small shop's reputation spreads through word of mouth, although the store's main demographic still is the younger population. "When I was first thinking about the store and I asked anyone from my generation about it, they had 1,000 questions and they all started with 'Wait,' " Logan said. "When I asked anyone of [teenagers'] generation they said, 'When do you open?' They just got the idea."

This adolescent understanding clearly showed in Sweetie Fry's first months. "When we first started, we connected with the college students at John Carroll and other colleges in the area and the young adults at Shaker and Cleveland Heights," Logan said. He estimates that for the first six months no one over 30 visited the store. He explained that after this, the students started telling other people and bringing family members in, spurring an increase in the shop's older demographic. Luckily, his hard work paid off, and Sweetie Fry is now a fixture in the community.

Though Sweetie Fry is successful so far, the limited diversity of menu items may present problems in the future if the novelty fades. Logan, however, has some plans to address this. He just added funnel birthday cakes to the menu, which feature ice cream on a funnel cake layer. This addition provides the opportunity for growth in events such as birthday parties. He has also recently included more meal-like items, such as the Thai pork peanut satay, which he said will be, "another entrée that will help position Sweetie Fry as a restaurant, not a snack shop."

However, the most exciting addition to the restaurant is yet to come; homemade mini donuts are in Sweetie Fry's future. Logan plans on selling a half dozen per order with different coatings including cinnamon, maple, glazed and white powder and hopes they will be done by Christmas.

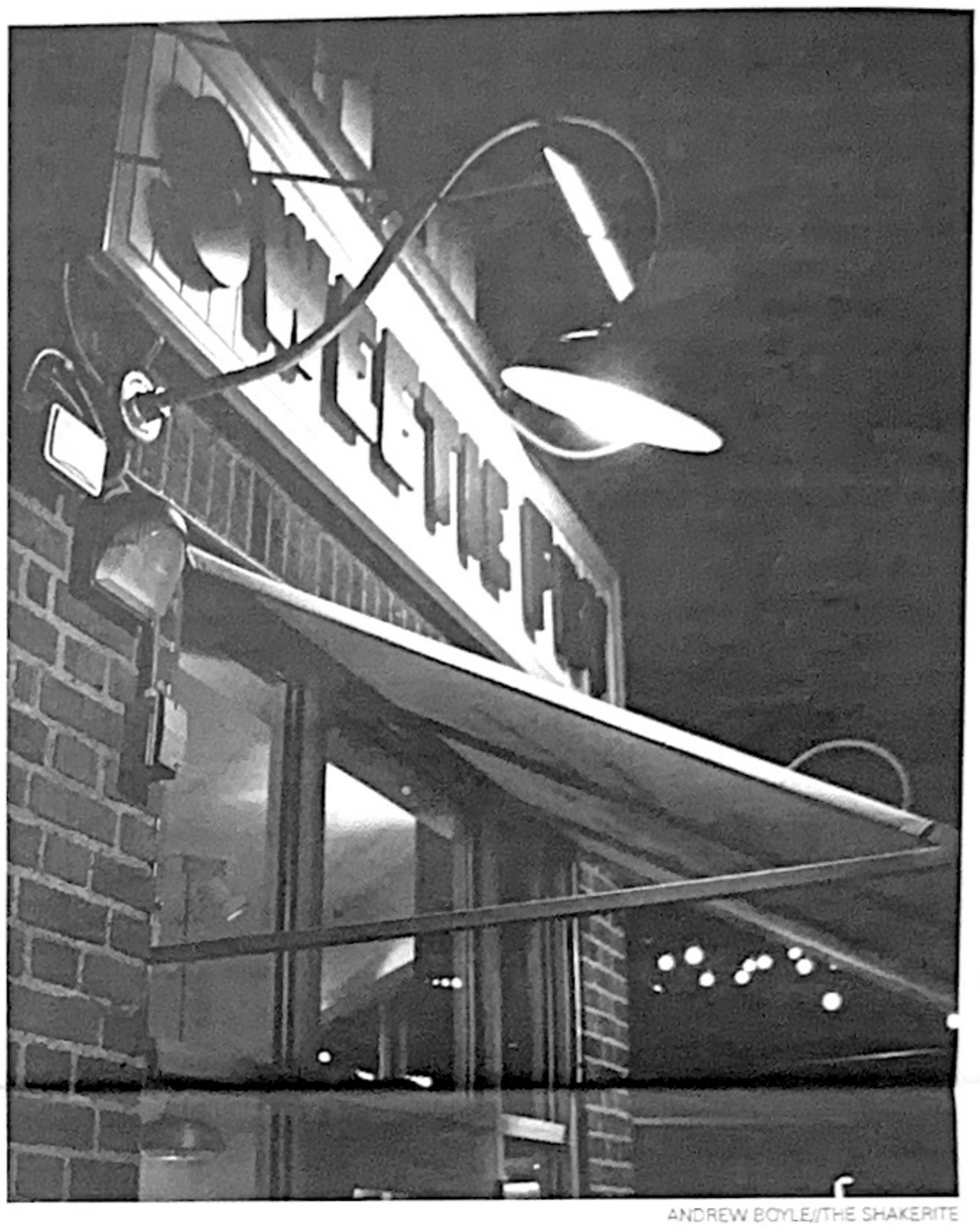
Even with the promise of new and exciting food, Logan is still unsure of expanding throughout Ohio.

"The only answer I know at this point is that I still have a lot of work to do here," he said, "so not yet and maybe never." He said this is not due to competition. "If we want to grow, it's not that we have competition, it's that we haven't told enough people.

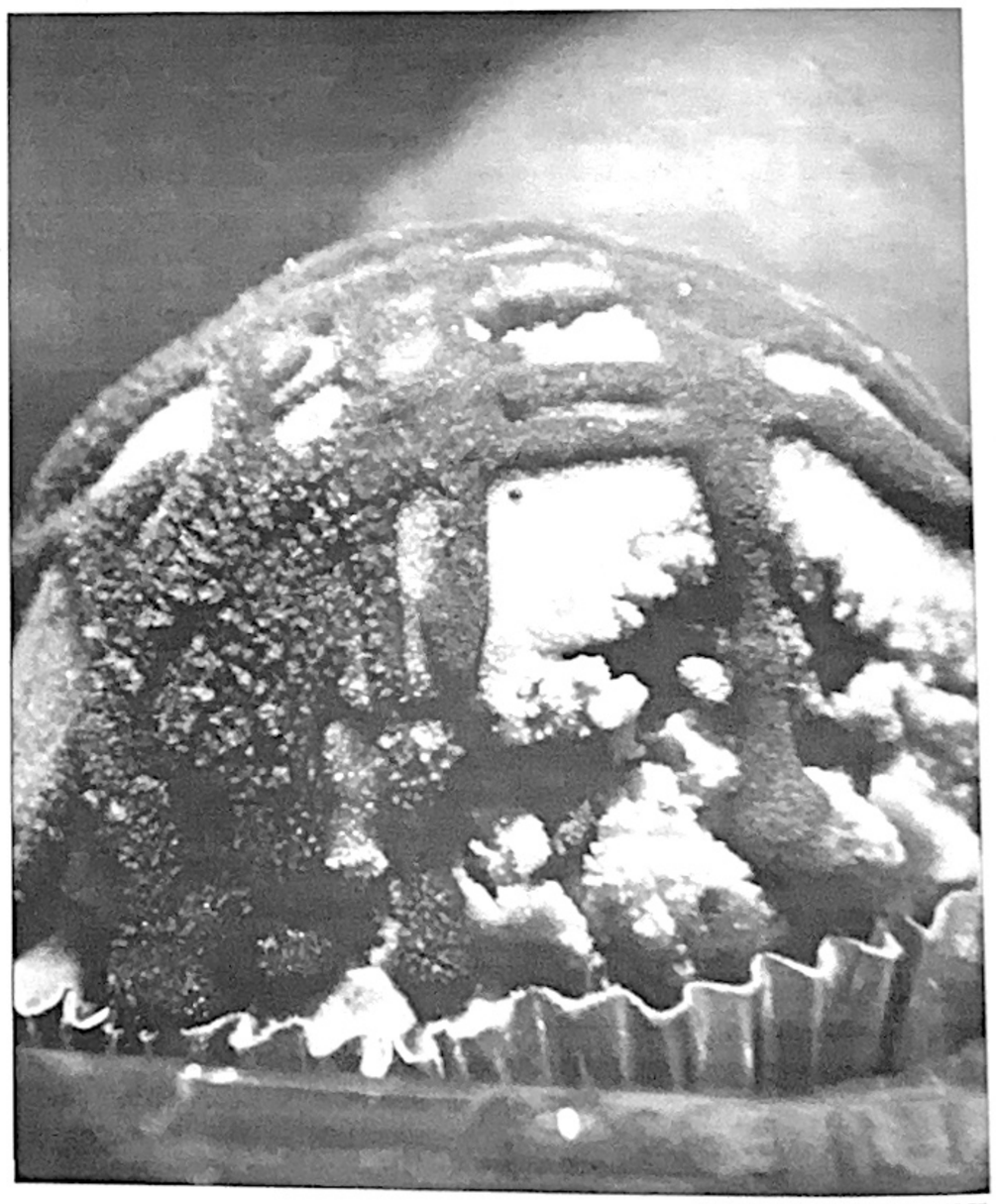
It seems like everyone at Shaker knows about us, but we estimate that only 10-15 percent of the population in Shaker or Cleveland Heights actually knows about our business." He asks people who enjoy the store to write positive reviews on Yelp, to bring their parents for dinner, to add ice cream to their holiday festivities and to request Sweetie Fry gift cards for the holidays.

Sweetie Fry remains a thriving, interesting and tasty restaurant. It is clear Logan's success is due not only to his hard work, but also to his love for ice cream, which he thinks he will "still be learning about in 10 years." He also credits his connection with the community and the individuals who helped him grow. "I want the Shaker students to know that I think Shaker has been a main reason for our success," he said. "I want them to know how grateful we are for all their support. Sweetie Fry loves Shaker Heights!"

On the Web Visit www.shakerite.com for a full gallery of Sweetie Fry pictures and a chance to win a free one-scoop coupon by responding to a question on the Sweetie Fry story.



ANDREW BOYLE//THE SHAKERITE



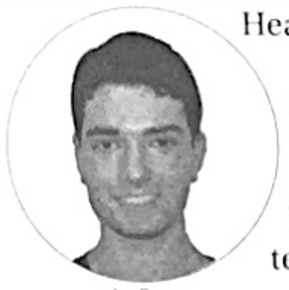
ANDREW BOYLE//THE SHAKERITE

Located in Cleveland Heights on 2307 Lee Road, Sweetie Fry now offers new treats for the holidays, such as the six-scoop sampler (above) and two special gift cards that have a hidden 20 free scoops of ice cream.

Don't Let LeBron Win

"I will be taking my talents to South Beach."

These words will live in infamy in Cleveland sports fans' hearts. On June 8, 2010, LeBron James became one of the most hated sports figures in Cleveland when he left the Cleveland Cavaliers for the Miami Heat on national TV.



Ari Ross

Two years later, the King has his ring, and the Miami Heat is the NBA's best team. James has realized his full potential and is unstoppable. Owner Dan Gilbert's promises are unfulfilled and the Cavaliers, with lots of young talent, face another losing season.

The Heat beat the Cavs 110-108 Nov. 24 in Miami. The Cavaliers controlled the entire game, but were unable to pull out the win.

The Heat won't come to town until March.

When James is introduced, will we boo him? Will we scream obscenities as we did previously? Do we still hate him?

Senior John Longman does. He said he hates LeBron. "He abandoned us," and hurt Cleveland and the Cavs, he said.

I don't hate LeBron James. I don't feel an urge to scream at him. I hate what he did, but I don't hate him anymore.

Plain Dealer sports columnist Terry Pluto agrees. "I'm long past hating athletes," he said. "There are much more important things than LeBron James." Pluto said after a few years, you have to let the hatred go.

Pluto said although James left Cleveland, he didn't take the franchise with him, like the late Art Modell did when he moved the Browns to Baltimore. "LeBron was a big name leaving," said Pluto, "but the Cavs are still here."

People still hate Modell because he took the team – and hundreds of jobs -- away in the middle of the night. LeBron left in a very arrogant way, but he did not ruin the Cavaliers forever. They're still in town, improving and recovering from his departure.

So stop hating LeBron. You can still dislike him for his arrogance and what he did, but he hasn't ruined our lives or the city.

More importantly, start rooting for the Cavs. According to Pluto, Cleveland is a football town, and the Cavaliers are the least popular team here.

Does this mean we have forgotten about them since LeBron left? Has LeBron ruined our pride and hope in our team? LeBron left because he thought he could never win a ring in Cleveland. Is this the case?

I say no. Don't let LeBron win. Let's prove him wrong. Let's give the Cavaliers fans to play for. Let's show LeBron that you can win a championship in Cleveland.

When LeBron and the Heat come, ignore him. Let's cheer on our team, and not let him have his way. Let's go, Cavs!

JAMES CULLEN

Senior Erin Cullen runs past a North Royalton runner at the NOC River Division meet on Oct. 13. Cullen finished first while Shaker finished fifth out of six teams. Cross Country Coach Dave Englander said, "Erin's been the most successful runner in school history"

Cullen Runs Shaker to Success

ANNA SEBALLOS STAFF REPORTER

Senior Erin Cullen has run far enough to cross the country three times.

The cross country and track standout runs 50 miles a week, seven days a week, 48 weeks a year, in any weather. She gave up candy and soda, along with time with friends, to run. Some may call it insane, but those who know Cullen call it devotion.

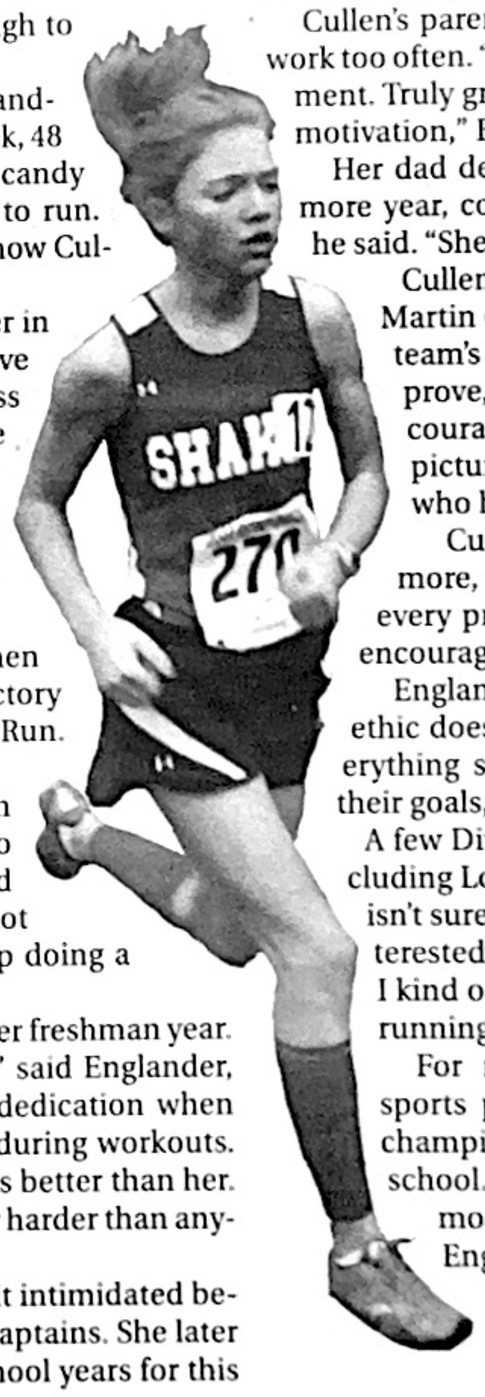
"Erin's been the most successful runner in school history," cross country coach Dave Englander said. Cullen runs the 5K in cross country and the 4x800 meter relay, the 3200 meter run and the 1600 in indoor and outdoor track. She broke the school record for the two-mile time—twice – and is the only Shaker runner to qualify to the state meet more than once.

Cullen began running Shaker track when she was in seventh grade, but her first victory was placing second in the Woodbury Fun Run. "I always liked running," she said.

Since freshman year, Cullen has been working hard. Her dad, Kim Cullen, also noticed the change. "She had a good middle school career, but she worked a lot harder in high school, and she ended up doing a lot better," he said.

Cullen set a record in the 4x800 relay her freshman year. "She just has a huge capacity for work," said Englander, who became aware of her talents and dedication when she was keeping up with her superiors during workouts. "She has never accepted that anyone was better than her. She's always wanted to work as hard as or harder than anyone else there," Englander said.

As an underclassman, Cullen often felt intimidated because she didn't want to beat the team captains. She later realized, "I've trained my whole high school years for this and shouldn't let anyone stop me."



Cullen's parents and coach don't have to push her to work too often. "She hasn't needed that much encouragement. Truly great athletes are willing to have their own motivation," Englander said.

Her dad described her drive. "Especially in sophomore year, competitiveness came naturally in races," he said. "She wanted to improve more and more."

Cullen is co-captain with Nikki Mercer and Sara Martin on the cross country team, and she is the team's conscience. Cullen pushes Martin to improve, and Martin admires the way Cullen encourages others. "She goes out there, she takes pictures, she yells her loudest," said Martin, who has run with Cullen for five years.

Cullen's teammate Ilana Sadholz, a sophomore, noted her positive attitude. "She comes to every practice and she doesn't complain . . . she encourages us to get faster," Sadholz said.

Englander said Cullen's strong individual work ethic doesn't interfere with teamwork. She "did everything she could to help her teammates realize their goals," he said.

A few Division I schools have recruited Cullen, including Loyola University Chicago. However, Cullen isn't sure she wants to run in college. "I'm more interested in going to college for an education, and I kind of want to see what I have to offer that isn't running related," she said.

For now, Cullen still influences the Shaker sports program. The Raiders have been district championships twice since Cullen started high school. "Her time here at Shaker -- it's been the most successful time the school's ever had," Englander said.

Cullen's motto is, "Never give up on something you can't go a day without thinking about."

Hoop Teams to Face, Dish Out Competition

Young women's team with new coach sees challenging schedule with move to the NOC

KATHLEEN KALAFATIS SENIOR WRITER

Despite an influx of young players, a new conference and a new coach, the women's basketball team hopes for a successful season.

The Raiders face a more difficult schedule than last season due to Shaker's recent move to the Northeast Ohio Conference, which includes Twinsburg, last year's Division I state champions. Shaker faces the Tigers Jan. 5 at home and Feb. 13 away.

Last season the women's basketball team went 15-7 and finished second place in the Lake Erie League. This year's squad comprises mostly underclassmen and includes only four seniors.

"We do have a pretty young team, but they are pretty talented," senior captain Gala Hughley said.

Athletic Director Don Readance said the team is very young, tall and talented but thinks the biggest issue will be the team's lack of varsity game experience.

"I am still expecting all the girls to work hard and get as far as we can. It all comes down to hard work and team chemistry," Hughley said.

Along with the athletic conference switch, the women's basketball team has a new a coach, Randy Thomas ('01). Thomas was an assistant coach at Twinsburg and is no stranger to the new conference.

The NOC is much more competitive than the LEL. Regarding the increased competition, Thomas said, "We will adapt and play at the level that we can."

The Raiders have a variety of skillful players, giving younger players more chances to impact the game.

"We will continue to get better every practice, game and scrimmage," Thomas said. He said in the future Shaker women's basketball will be the best in the NOC.

"It'll be a big challenge, but a good challenge," Readance said. "In time the program will compete successfully."

WILL MCKNIGHT//THE SHAKERITE

Senior Gala Hughley drives to the basket during the home opener against St. Vincent St. Mary Nov. 28. Shaker lost 47-35. Athletic Director Don Readance said the move to the Northeast Ohio Conference will be "a big challenge but a good challenge" for the women's basketball team, and he believes that "in time the program will compete successfully"

Men's team hopes to overcome loss of Rozier and make a tourney run through team effort

ARI ROSS RAIDER ZONE EDITOR

Rarely does a team lose its star player and go on to improve without them the next season.

Last year the men's basketball team was 21-3, Lake Erie League and district champions and qualified for the regional final. After losing seven seniors, including star point guard Terry Rozier, this year's team must work hard to repeat last year's success.

Basketball Coach Danny Young said he expects the team "to play hard and smart together, carry themselves as positive young men and be role models." Plain Dealer Reporter Tim Rogers said he expects the team to excel. "A lot of kids are coming back, and they added one of the best freshmen in Ohio," Rogers said, referring to freshman point guard Keith Griffin.

According to Young, some people don't think Shaker will outperform last year's team. However, Young said the Raiders are equipped to replace Rozier because of key players such as junior Rosel Hurley and seniors Kash Blackwell and Melran Leach.

The road to success may be bumpy. Young scheduled many tough games against private schools such as St. Edwards and St. John Jesuit. He said that because the Raiders play all the best schools, Shaker could potentially lose every game.

But Young said he thinks Shaker will perform better than last year because the squad is more balanced and everyone will play a great role, like the 1999 team, which played for the state title.

The Raiders opened the season as the top-ranked school in the Plain Dealer's high school men's basketball poll but fell 55-41 to Toledo St. John's Dec. 1. Shaker played without Blackwell, Leach, Jimmy Pope and Hurley, who were serving 2-game suspensions.

Rogers said that like any school in the Plain Dealer's Top 25 Poll, "They have a chance to be very good."

Moran, Griffin, Hurley Bring Diverse Assets to Raider Basketball

FRANCI DOUGLASS STAFF REPORTER

Singapore is 9,482.7 miles away. That's a long way to travel to play basketball.

Junior Emily Moran, 6 foot 1 inch, 160 pounds, is a captain of the women's varsity basketball team this year. She moved back to Shaker from Singapore, where she lived last year, just before the school year began.

At her school in Singapore Moran averaged double figures in points and rebounds.

Emily Moran

Women's basketball coach Randy Thomas said that Moran is adapting well. Moran's greatest challenge is not related to the move, however. Too much time on the court brought on back spasms and a sprained ankle, but the problems have subsided with the help of physical therapy and rest. Thomas said Moran's return to the court "says a lot about her character and dedication to her team."

Moran plays power forward and post. She said her strengths are defense and free throw shooting. "My ability to communicate with the team . . . helps us to keep a tight defense," Moran said.

Although Moran hopes to play college basketball on a scholarship, Thomas said, "Since she's new not a lot of colleges are aware of her, and it's going to be a process to get into this year."

ARI ROSS RAIDER ZONE EDITOR

Keith Griffin is 5 foot 10 inches, 180 pounds and has captured the interest of at least eight Division I colleges.

And he's only a freshman.

With the men's basketball team facing the stark reality of Terry Rozier's graduation, Griffin, who starts at varsity point guard, hopes to ease the transition.

According to basketball coach Danny Young, Griffin is "tough as nails, like a little bulldog." He said Griffin is a great defender, gets everyone involved, can finish a shot after contact and hit the three.

Keith Griffin

Griffin, who has played basketball since sixth grade, said he needs to improve at "being a real vocal leader."

Plain Dealer high school basketball reporter Tim Rogers said Griffin is one of the top three freshmen in the area and "one of the best freshmen in Ohio."

Griffin has already received interest from colleges including West Virginia and Dayton.

Young said Griffin has earned Rozier's approval. Rozier, a Louisville recruit and second-team all-Ohio pick last year, told Young that if Griffin works hard and stays humble, he'll be in good shape to outperform even him.

"He has the gifts to do it," Young said. "He has a chance to be special."

ALEX SMITH RAIDER ZONE EDITOR

Junior Rosel Hurley enters this season with 11 NCAA Division I scholarship offers, and he anticipates another successful run for the Raiders.

Hurley hopes to improve on his last year's scoring and rebounding averages (10 ppg and 2 rpg) using his 6-foot-5-inche, 165-pound frame to do so.

Head coach Danny Young described Hurley as "long and athletic, and hard to stop in the open court." Young believes Hurley is vital to the Raiders' success.

Rosel Hurley

Hurley strives to exceed his coach's expectations. "I want to become more versatile and able to run point guard as well as work down on the block."

Plain Dealer reporter Tim Rogers expects Hurley's numbers to increase greatly this season. He believes Hurley is "one of the best juniors around."

Hurley has received offers from Cleveland State, Akron and Dayton, among others. Dayton's style of play especially appeals to Hurley, but he doesn't want to get ahead of himself.

Despite all of the attention, Hurley remains humble trying to focus on the upcoming season. "I'm not going to jump into anything until next year," he said. "It's a blessing, but I know I have to stay focused."

"CnXn is ultimately a reflection of one's identity -- that of being an athlete."

BRIAN VERNE

Shaker Alums forge 'CnXn' for Athletes

ALEX SMITH RAIDERZONE EDITOR

Two Shaker graduates are poised to help millions of athletes make a CnXn.

The CnXn (pronounced connection) brand seen on T-shirts throughout Shaker was originally intended to be a fundraising apparel brand. Now, the brand is evolving into an online platform aiming to connect athletic communities and further modernize the athletic world.

The athletic community is evolving with improving technology. Brian Verne and Michael Eppich, Shaker class of 2005 graduates, have partnered with Jack Dunn, Oberlin College class of 2009, to transform CnXn in that vein.

In 2011, Verne, Eppich and Dunn began the brand's move to a much larger medium, connecting athletes, coaches, tournaments, showcases and other athletic aids. As CnXn grows, social media use is becoming the brand's focus, and they hope to connect different aspects of the modernizing athletic community.

"The first main problem we're trying to solve is the difficulty and inability for athletes to find the people that make them better," Verne said.

When the service launches, athletes will be able to use CnXn to find and register for camps, showcases and instructors. These registrations will show up on what Eppich called a digital sports card. Conversely, players will show up on the profile of the sports businesses as clients.

Michael Eppich

Brian Verne

"Imagine a digital baseball card that can be traded, shared and updated to reflect an athlete's entire career," said Eppich. "Each card will be branded by area code and made searchable for fellow players, coaches, scouts and fans. Now imagine all of the best coaches, teams, leagues, facilities, camps, tournaments, showcases, combines and sports businesses have a digital 'business card' tied to the same localized network. The result will be the ultimate competitive database."

All three men played baseball in college, Eppich at Rollins College, Verne and Dunn at Oberlin. "Brian and I wanted to do something different, and sports have been a big part of our lives," Eppich said.

They used their shared athletic experiences and paired them with their educations to create a business opportunity for themselves in a tough economy.

"As an athlete you have this innate competitive desire and will to win," Verne said. "CnXn has served as an extension to the baseball field allowing us to exercise that competitive nature, just in a different arena . . . CnXn is ultimately a reflection of one's identity – that of being an athlete."

The athletic community CnXn targets is an extremely large and increasingly growing field. "We define it as the 7.6 million high school athletes, 561,000 collegiate athletes, 44 million youth athletes, 251,000 private instructors, 29,000 fitness centers, and 12,000+ camps," Verne stated in an email. Other potential CnXn services could include event live streaming, digital ticket sales for high school games, and a platform for athletes to sell old equipment.

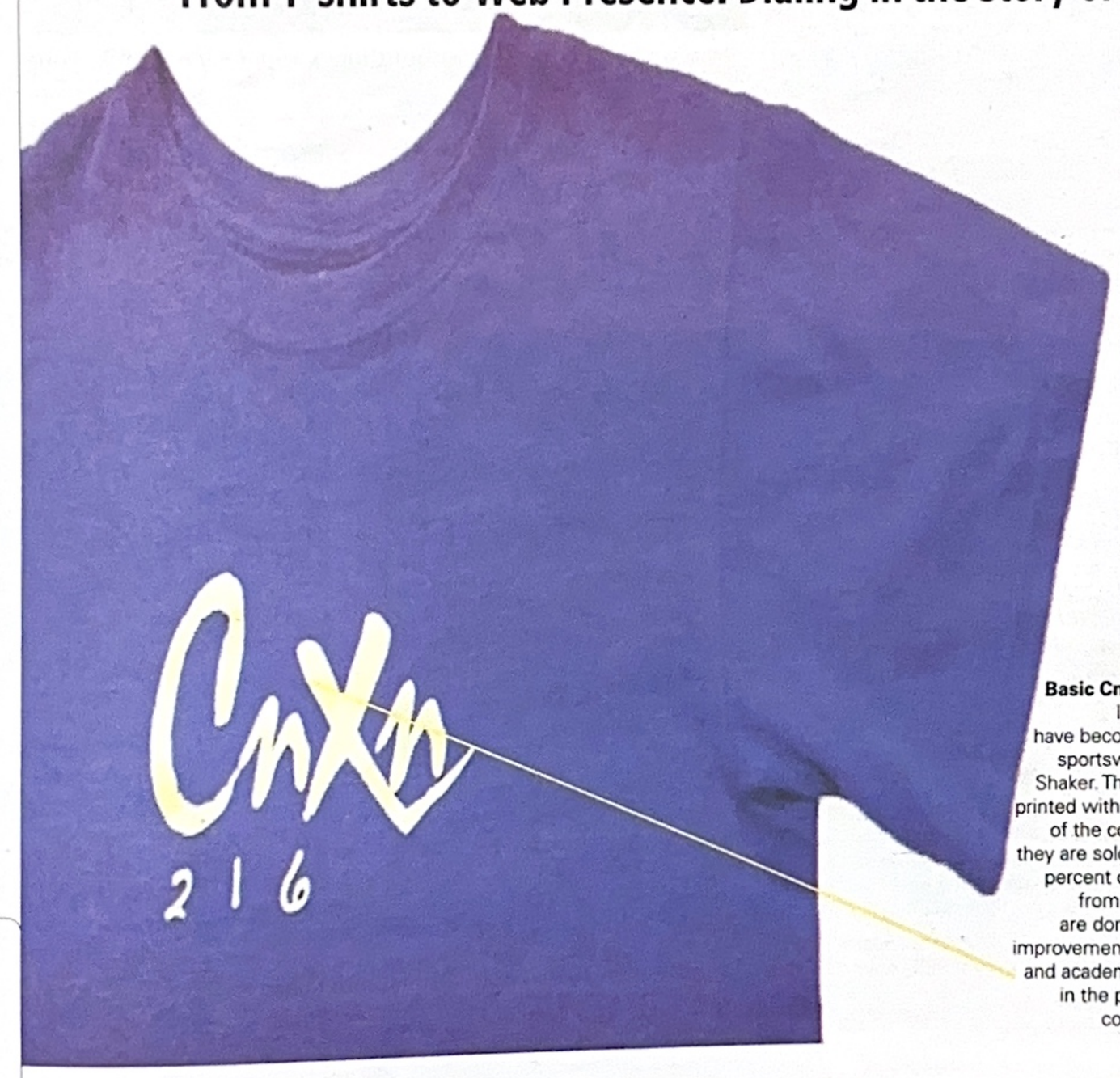
Verne said they have an experienced design and development team working on the website's "soft launch," expected in March.

"We would like the Shaker athletes to all create their player card and test out the platform," Verne said.

Eppich and Verne share excitement about how far their business has grown, as well as the CnXn brand's future.

Eppich said, "Every day we are hitting milestones and getting closer to our goal, and setting new ones along the way."

From T-shirts to Web Presence: Dialing In the Story of Shaker Alumni's Athletic Company



Basic CnXn T-shirts like this one have become popular sportswear around Shaker. The shirts are printed with area codes of the communities they are sold in. Fifteen percent of proceeds from each T-shirt are donated to the improvement of athletic and academic facilities in the participating communities.

The Future CnXn

CnXn has evolved from an apparel company to an interactive website targeting athletes and those with athletic interests. Eppich said, "The platform will connect athletes, parents, coaches, instructors, camps, facilities and local sports organizations by way of an interactive platform made by, and catered to, the modern athlete."

The Localized CnXn

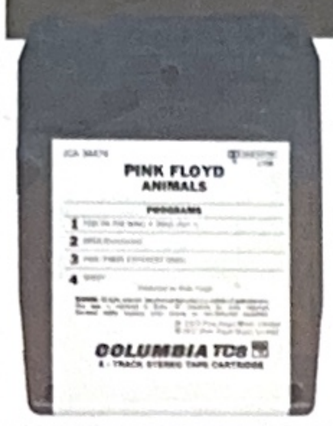
In 2009, Verne, Eppich and Dunn launched their company to use apparel as a fundraising tool for the educational and athletic development of contributing communities. Fifteen percent of each sale was donated to the community in which the sale was made. Each community was represented on the clothing by its area code.

Where can CnXn be seen?

CnXn has outfitted about 15 professional athletes, including New York Jets fullback John Conner. CnXn produces merchandise for the Lake Erie Crushers among other independent and semi-professional sports teams. With the addition of the social media presence, CnXn will continue to produce athletic apparel for local high schools as well as those in neighboring cities and states.

How It All Began

"CnXn was born in a Wendy's parking lot, junior bacon cheeseburgers in-hand, as an athletic apparel company with a unique branding solution," Eppich said. "We wanted to give athletes a way to represent their hometown, their area code, on their athletic apparel."



Retrotech: 8-Track Tapes

SARAH-JANE LORENZO

Eight track tapes, the predecessors of cassettes, are magnetic tape recording cartridges that were popular from the 1960s to the 1980s. Many cars manufactured during that time had built-in eight-track players, and eight-track users could purchase players for their offices and homes.

The English Quiz

MARCIA BROWN

Do you know the American English definitions of these British English words and phrases?

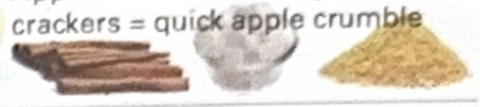
1. Trainers
2. Fringe
3. Lorry
4. Chips
5. Crisps
6. Maize
7. Cheerio
8. Juggernaut
9. Girl Guide
10. Dustbin

1. Tennis shoes 2. Bangs 3. Truck 4. French fries 5. Potato chips 6. Corn 7. Goodbye 8. 18-wheeler truck 9. Girl Scout 10. Garbage can

Really Quick Recipe

SARAH-JANE LORENZO

Apples+cinnamon+sugar+graham crackers = quick apple crumble



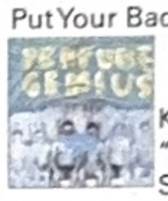
Top 5 Albums of 2012

SHANE MCKEON AND ALEX RICH

1. Frank Ocean/Channel Orange

Key Tracks: "Thinkin Bout You", "Pyramids"

2. Perfume Genius/ Put Your Back N 2 It



Key Tracks: "Sister Song", "Take Me Home"

3. Kendrick Lamar/ good kid, m.A.A.d city

Key Tracks: "Backseat Freestyle", "The Art of Peer Pressure"

4. Grizzly Bear/ Shields

Key Tracks: "Sleeping Ute", "Yet Again"

5. Macklemore and Ryan Lewis/The Heist

Key Tracks: "Thrift Shop," "Same Love"

3-second reviews

ARI ROSS, ANDREW MURPHY AND JOSH JACOBS

"Skyfall"

Different Bond with same action.

"Lincoln"

Depressingly historically accurate.

"Wreck It Ralph"

Great for video gamers.

One Page
THE SHAKERITE

Fill in the Blanks for a Shaker Story

SARAH SHAW

Twas a late starting _____ (day of the week) and all through the school, not a _____ (noun) was _____ (-ing verb) not even a _____ (noun). All of the _____ (plural noun) sat in their rooms with the hope that a _____ (noun) would soon be there. The _____ (plural noun) were _____ (past tense verb) by the _____ (noun) with _____ (adjective), in the hope that some _____ (plural noun) would soon be there. The _____ (same noun) were _____ (-ing verb) at home in their _____ (plural noun).

The Meh List

SARAH-JANE LORENZO AND SARAH SHAW

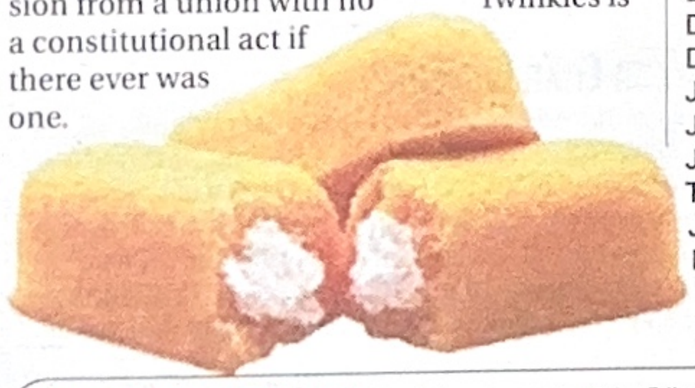
- Winter weather
- School Wifi
- Using student IDs
- Star Wars 7
- Gangam Style
- Finals after break
- Senior skip day
- Hostess
- College
- The end of the world

Listen to The Shakerite's Raider Nation podcast online at www.shakerite.com. New podcasts are posted weekly. Scan the QR code for easy access.

Raider Rant: Obama's Term Tied to Twinkies

WALKER EDWARDS

President Obama, this country needs Hostess and the delicious Twinkies it produces. Do you not see how it is a crime to legalize marijuana while Twinkies are being taken off shelves? Many in Colorado will go hungry. American jobs will be creamed, and you need to discuss this honestly, with no fluff. Herman Cain wouldn't have let America go without cream-filled yellow sponges. You're lucky this is happening in your second term, or else re-election would have been impossible. For all of history, your regime will now be known as the cruel bystander to the end of the Twinkie. What's wrong is that we live in a country where a car manufacturer will get bailed out, but I can't get Twinkies. Secession from a union with no Twinkies is a constitutional act if there ever was one.



News to Know

SARAH-JANE LORENZO

In early January the managers of "The Plain Dealer," Cleveland's daily newspaper, will announce the details of a digital restructuring plan the paper will follow. There is speculation that this new plan will put an end to the paper's print edition, ending a 170-year stretch of daily print editions for the paper. A "Save the Plain Dealer" campaign has been in action since November. Community members who would like to participate in the campaign can get involved through the campaign's Facebook page. As of Dec. 7, the page had more than 4,800 likes.

Winter Sports Schedule

ARI ROSS

Dec. 13: Wrestling vs. Brush 7:00 away
Dec. 18: Men's basketball vs. Strongsville 7:30
Dec. 21: Swimming vs. Solon 5:30
Dec. 20-23: Hockey Thornton Park Tournament TBD
Jan. 3: Women's basketball vs. Magnificat 7:30
Jan. 4: Hockey vs. Lake Catholic 7:00
Jan. 5: Women's basketball vs. Twinsburg 7:30
Jan. 11: Swimming vs. Mayfield 6:00
Jan. 13: Hockey vs. Strongsville 4:30

APPSESSED

SARAH SHAW AND DAVID SHAKNO

Someone who buys so many apps he can't remember which apps he has and mostly doesn't use them.

"You ran out of memory because you have so many apps? You're so appsessed!"

SASHA RAE GRANT//THE SHAKERITE

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